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ABSTRACT

Although supervision has become an innovative area in which ideas can easily be introduced to teachers, conservative attitudes in Turkey's ministry of education prevent implementation of changes desired by teachers, supervisors, and educational directors. Because the Turkish education system is centralized, government makes major policy and administrative decisions. Supervisors, who control either elementary or secondary schools, have inherited a high level of authority from the autocratic French system introduced in the 19th century. Two research studies on supervisory activities conducted in 1971-72 and in 1976-77 reveal the following: (1) Teachers do not perceive supervisory activities as helpful because they are supervised once yearly or less; (2) supervisors, on the other hand, believe that they frequently provide professional help; (3) teachers regard supervisors as not being well qualified in subject areas, professional knowledge, and evaluation (supervisors, however, believe that they are well qualified in those fields); (4) teachers emphasize attitudinal aspects of supervisory activities, whereas supervisors emphasize technical and professional activities; (5) supervisors have an unrealistically high assessment of what they are accomplishing; and (6) the majority of educators in Turkey want change in the education system. (CJH)

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EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY: TURKEY

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EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY: TURKEY

The importance of supervision in the Turkish education has grown over the years because of real and pressing needs in the Turkish educational system. Turkish teachers today face increasingly complex educational tasks. In today's schools teaching and learning are becoming more important than ever before.

As a country in a stage of transition from being under-developed to developed, in Turkey teachers are expected not only to give knowledge of the three R's but to improve desired attitudes, develop essential skills, and strengthen loyalties to the society and the way of life which will directly influence the development of society.

The Turkish educational system is a highly centralized organization. The Ministry of Education in Ankara has to make all important policy and administrative decisions. The appointment of teachers and administrators, the selection of textbooks, and the selection of subjects for the curriculum are all decided by the central office in the Capital City. A national curriculum is followed in every school and all educational activities are controlled by the supervisors appointed by the Minister of Education.

DEFINITION AND STATUS OF SUPERVISOR

Since the American educational system has its own decentralized structure, the definition of supervisor might vary, not only from one state to the other, but even within one state from one city to the other.

Since the Turkish educational system is a centralized organization, central government has the right to decide main policy and administrative decisions. The Minister is the highest administrator and has the last word in education. Therefore even the definition and responsibilities of supervisor are defined by the Ministry of Education. The word supervisor, "Mufettish" in the Turkish language, implies an inspection function more than the meaning in English. It can be said that the best translation of "Mufettish" into English is "Inspector". Mufettish means the person who inspects, controls and directs an organization on behalf of the Minister of Education.

There are two types of supervisors in the Turkish educational system. The first is the elementary school supervisor whose job is to control the elementary schools grades 1 to 5 within a prescribed province. The second is the "Ministry supervisor" whose job is to inspect and control secondary schools grades 6 to 11 and all other educational institutions excluding universities. The latter can supervise the activities of the elementary school supervisors whenever it is necessary.

The supervisor has very high status in the Turkish hierarchical structure. He has the authority to visit any

school, supervise any teacher, any time of the year, according to a prepared activity program, which should be ratified by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. He is the "controller" of every individual: Director of school, teachers, clerks, and even janitors. This authority secures him a high status in the administrative hierarchy.[1]

This high authority and status of the supervisors was inherited from the old French system in which supervisors dominated and controlled all of the educational personnel.

As early as the beginning of the 17th Century Western European influence, especially the French, has been seen in the Ottoman culture. This influence continued until the U.S.A. began to have close relationships with European and Middle East countries. After the Second World War, the U.S.A. increased her relationship with Turkey in technical, educational and economic fields. This relationship developed almost to the point of a major transition from one foreign influence to another.

In the 19th Century there was a rapid westernization in Ottoman society. Ottoman leaders, especially those educated in France, looked to France for inspiration and

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[1] Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Teftiş Kurulu Yönetmeliği, Millî Eğitim Basımevi, Ankara, 1968, Article 1, p. 10.

guidance for desired reforms. The French, anxious to strengthen their political and cultural influence in the Middle East, provided needed advice and services to Ottoman leaders. Consequently in the field of education, since the only source for advisory ideas was French advisors, the French system of education was copied completely by the Turkish administrators. Thus the French system of supervision was introduced into the Turkish educational system.[1]

The French influence continued until 1950, and the autocratic technique of supervision has remained the same way. Only after 1950 did Turkish educators begin to accept American educational philosophy and principles, in which more democratic human relations between teachers and supervisors are emphasized.

But still today it is possible to see the residue of autocratic French attitudes among most of the Turkish supervisors. Even some of the supervisors who believe in the necessity of friendly and democratic supervision are handicapped in building close relationships with teachers by the regulations of the Board of Supervisors. For example, supervisors must:

a. not publicize their exact duties and the names of the places to which they are assigned.

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[1]Andreas M. Kazamias, Education and the Quest for Modernity in Turkey (University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 155-158.

b. not be involved with any of the administrative functions of the institutions which they are inspecting.

c. not put any marks, corrections and explanations on the records and other official office papers except those marks indicating that those papers were inspected.

d. not publicize any of the findings they made during their supervisory activities.

e. not be house guest to those persons whose duties and performance are to be inspected, and/or borrow any money and engage in any business interactions.[1]

As can be seen from the above regulations supervisors must not have close relationships with the teacher. In the American educational system, the supervisor maintains no more than a small social distance between himself and the teacher and maintains the position of a friendly helpful advisor on both personal and professional matters. In the Turkish system the situation is different.

NEEDS FOR SUPERVISION

The academic and professional training of teachers in Turkey despite recent wishful attempts is absurdly low. At present the quality of instruction in the Turkish educational system is suffering because at least 84 per cent of elementary school teachers have high school level training and 68 per cent of secondary school teachers have no more than 2-3 years junior college education.

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[1]Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Teftiş Kurulu Yönetmeliği, Op.cit., p. 22, Article 38.

In the Turkish educational system, the teacher's task is unbelievably overburdened, this teaching duties are likely to suffer from the heavy demands made upon his time (1) the size of classes, sometimes 60-70 students in one room, and the less sophisticated physical facilities within which he has to perform his teaching. Except in some schools in larger cities like Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, teaching materials, professional publications and libraries are not available when teachers want them. Therefore, teachers may feel somewhat compelled to teach through traditional methods and to utilize only their own knowledge and experience which usually has been gained from the teacher training institutions some years earlier.

There are not many facilities and opportunities for teachers if they want to improve their professional knowledge and the effectiveness of their performance. Although the Ministry of Education organizes some in-service courses for teachers to help them to acquire new educational knowledge and innovations only a small number of teachers have the chance to attend these activities, only 23355 teachers out of 351178 were lucky enough to participate in one-two week in-service training program in 1985.

There is no qualified educational publication especially prepared for teachers to inform them of such new professional practices as student evaluation, teaching methods, guidance in schools, use of audio-visual materials, or laboratory techniques.

Under these circumstances the Turkish teacher seems to be a lonely and helpless public worker trying to perform his task successfully despite overcrowded classrooms, lack of teaching materials and educational publications (even resource books) uncomfortable physical environments and not uncommonly (in view of his salary expectations) financial difficulties as well.

In the Turkish educational system there would seem to be one person-the supervisor- who might help the teacher to overcome these difficulties and problems. Teachers in Turkey need to keep informed concerning this specialized body of professional knowledge. The increasing size of schools and teaching staff, the large number of new inexperienced teachers and the high percentage of failure in secondary schools indicate the need for more professional help which will provide the necessary support to help teachers in their difficult job.

This aid might be best provided by supervisors who recognize their main job as "assistance in the development of a better teaching-learning situation in the schools". This key role of supervisors would appear to be highly related to helping teachers improve their teaching methods and to finding solutions to their educational problems.

RESEARCH ON SUPERVISION

Turkish literature in educational supervision does not have many sources. There are only a few studies which deal directly with supervisory activities in the Turkish educational system. One or two additional studies have been conducted or reports prepared which contain indirect implications for supervision. Consequently educational supervision in Turkey has remained a sacred area which had never been studied intensively until 1970.

The American educator Ellsworth Tomkins was invited to Turkey to participate in meetings for the reorganization of the educational system. In 1952 he prepared his report covering various aspects of education of Turkey. In his report he said:

> "I asked hundreds of teachers and directors of schools whether supervisors were helpful during the supervisory activities. None of them said "Yes". .... I suppose that the teachers do not believe in the benefit of the applied supervisory methods... All the teachers in 75 secondary schools emphasized that a "two or three hour visit" of the supervisor is not enough to judge the teacher's performance in the school."[1]

Özgüneş, in his report on the organization of the Ministry of Education, emphasizes the importance of supervisory activities in the educational process. He concedes that the supervisors usually act as inspectors

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[1]Ellsworth Tomkins, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Orta Dereceli Okullarda Organizasyon, İdare ve Teftiş, Maarif Basımevi, İstanbul, 1954, pp. 11-13.

only for the faults and deficiencies of teachers.[1]

Bursalıoğlu, in his book writes that in the classical educational organizations (he implies the Turkish system) the Board of Supervisors is the most conservative or the least modernized unit. In this organization the supervisor performs his duties as "the inspector for clerical work or public prosecutor". Therefore he can not spare his time for the evaluation of teachers and the improvement of teaching-learning activities.[2]

Oğus made a study among 876 secondary school teachers, about "The problems of secondary school teachers" Approximately 65 per cent of the teachers believed that:

- teachers are not evaluated objectively.

- there is no consensus among supervisors about the criteria used in teacher evaluation.

- supervisory activities do not help the in-service training of teachers.[3]

Szyliowicz stated that in the Turkish educational system:

> "Inspection, supervision, and evaluation are carried out by poorly trained personnel, and their numbers are far too limited to provide any significant inputs for the classroom teacher.... When an inspector or supervisor does arrive, his visit is regarded with fear and trepidation. ... So that most are viewed as a "hatchet man or a persona non grata". Provincial inspectors (he

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[1]Mehmet Özgüneş, Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Merkez Teşkilatı Üzerinde Bir İnceleme. VII. Milli Eğitim Şurası Dokümanları, Milli Eğitim Basımevi, Ankara, 1962, p.19.

[2]Ziya Bursalıoğlu, Eğitim İdaresi, Kalaba Yayınevi, Ankara, 1967, p. 22.

[3]İhsan Ogus, "Orta Öğretimde Öğretmenlerin Şikayetleri" Master's thesis, submitted to Hacettepe University of Ankara, 1971.

> implies elementary school supervisors) though better trained, are not effective either. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that principals and directors are unable to provide educational leadership."[1]

To provide some answers to the crucial problems of the supervisory system in Turkey Karagözoğlu made two extensive studies which focused on the roles and effectiveness of supervisory practices in the Turkish educational system. These two pioneering studies shed light on the existing system of supervision which had never before been intensively studied in Turkey.

The first study made in 1971-1972 was about the roles of the Ministry Supervisors whose job is to control all educational activities and secondary level schools. This research was supported by the United States Agency for International Development under the National Education Research and Planning Project in Turkey (NERP) which aimed to develope the Turkish Educational System. The total number of 110 Ministry Supervisors and 1196 secondary school teachers out of total 36565 were used as a sample (1).

The second study made in 1976-1977 with the collaboration of the Ministry of Education dealt with the elementary school supervisory activities. The total number of 66 province directors of education 1254 elementary school teachers out of a total of 196.716, were used as a sample.

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[1]Joseph S. Szyliowicz, "Education and Modernization in the Middle East" Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, p. 363. 1973

It was hoped that the findings of these two studies would be helpful in developing improved objectives, practices, training, philosophy, and organization of supervision in the Turkish educational system. It was the researcher's intention to bring these findings directly to the attention of key administrative decision makers in the Ministry of Education so that they may make better decisions and plans for the future attempts to reorganize the development of the system.

PROBLEMS OF SUPERVISION

a) The numbers of educational institutions and teachers in Turkey, have increased rapidly in recent years. Since the Ministry of Education has a limited number of supervisors, it can not keep up with the increase. There were 112 Ministry supervisors and 1194 elementary school supervisors in 1970 and supervisor/teacher ratios were 1/346 and 1/149 respectively. Today supervisor/teacher ratios are higher. In 1985 there are 264 Ministry supervisors versus 121.390 secondary school teachers and 1292 elementary school supervisors versus 229.788 elementary school teachers. The supervisor/teacher ratios are 1/459 and 1/178 respectively. Consequently day by day the

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1- Galip Karagözoğlu "The Role of Ministry Supervisors in the Turkish Educational System." Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Michigan State University 1972.

2- Galip Karagözoğlu, "İlköğretimde Teftiş Uygulamaları" Unpublished Associate professor's dissertation, Hacettepe University, Ankara, 1977.

supervisory activities may tend to become routine, done mainly for the sake of applying the regulations.

Without reference to the other activities the figure for the supervision of teachers implies that if it continues at the same rate every Turkish secondary school teacher might be visited by one supervisor in every 6 or 7 years and every elementary school teacher in 1-2 years. This situation puts forward the most crucial problem of supervision in the Turkish educational system. It is difficult to imagine that the teacher will be able to get all of the help he needs to improve the teaching-learning situation in his school. Just one two-hour visit every few years to meet the professional needs of the teacher represents a ludicrous situation.

b- Lack of professionally trained supervisors poses another problem. Supervisors are trained as teachers. There is no requirement for professional training to be a supervisor. In recent years some universities have been offering one or two courses in educational supervision. Beyond this there are no inservice courses or seminars for supervisors except for the new supervisor's probationary period of one year under the control of a Head Supervisor.

Consequently educational supervisors have limited professional training and it could be said that they are not equipped with the necessary professional knowledge of supervisory techniques.

c- Lack of time for supervision is another important problem. The activity of supervisors is dominated by routine clerical work required by written rules and regulations. Writing the teacher's reports of evaluation and travelling from city to city or from village to village occupies most of the supervisors' time.

d- The multiplicity of the supervisors' functions reveals perhaps the most crucial problem. In the Turkish educational system the supervisor has five main roles and functions. He is expected to be an educator who helps the teacher professionally, an administrator who controls and improves the administrative process, an evaluator who does merit rating of personnel, a judge or prosecutor to solve conflicts in the system, and a researcher to introduce new ideas and innovations into the field of education.

However the supervisor might perform these simultaneous roles, even the roles themselves conflict with each other. A teacher naturally might hesitate to ask professional help from a supervisor who would be evaluating the teacher's competence.

e- There is no consistent follow-up on supervisory activities. Since the supervisors do not have any permanently assigned locality they might be assigned to any province or village for supervisory tours. The probabilities of meeting the same teacher again are very slight. Moreover, the supervisor cannot follow-up whether his suggestions have been adopted by the teacher whether the teacher has developed his teaching method by application of the recommendations made by the supervisor. On the teacher's side, the supervised teacher meets a different supervisor every time. Since the supervisors come from various backgrounds and do not have common training in supervisory techniques, each might have different views or ideas about supervisory practices. As a result of this, their suggestions and recommendations might be different from each other. Consequently the teacher sometimes becomes perplexed and wonders what is right or whom he should believe.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Karagözoğlu's two extensive researches on the supervisory activities and the role of supervisors in the Turkish Educational System reveals some interesting findings:

1- Teachers generally do not perceive current supervisory activities as helpful. The data indicated that teachers may be supervised no more than once a year or once in two-three years, and therefore may not regularly receive help when they need it.

2- There seems to be an underlying communications gap between supervisors and teachers regarding professional help provided by supervisors and received by teachers. While supervisors said they frequently provide professional help teachers on the contrary said they are not helpful.

3- Teachers have little confidence in the objectivity of evaluation of teachers by supervisors.

4- Regarding the qualifications of supervisors in terms of their professional capacities and attitudes, the teachers and supervisors have different perceptions. The teachers tend to regard the supervisors as not well qualified in subject matter fields, in professional knowledge, and in evaluation techniques. On the other hand, supervisors see themselves as well qualified in the above fields.

5- Most of the teachers see supervisors as sincere, friendly and likeable, which may reflect the fact that teachers accept supervisors as fellow human beings rather than authorities in teaching.

6- There was a high divergence or role conflict between the teachers' expectation of the supervisors' role and the supervisors' perceptions of the supervisors' role.

7- It appears that teachers emphasize the attitudinal aspects of supervisory activities while supervisors seem more to emphasize technical and professional activities as important.

8- Supervisors seem to have an unrealistically high assessment of what they are accomplishing.

9- A large majority of teachers, supervisors educational directors and school principals want change in the system. This suggests that all groups do not seem satisfied with the present system.

10- Teachers and supervisors feel frustrated by barriers to their accomplishing professional objectives. But supervisors say that despite the problems they face in supervisory duties they like their supervisory job.

IMPLICATIONS

From the finding of his studies on the supervisory activities in the Turkish educational system Karagözoğlu suggested the following implications.

1- The educational supervisory system in Turkey should be reorganized in the light of modern supervisory principles in order to eliminate deficiencies identified by recent studies. For this purpose:

- The number of supervisors could well be increased fourfold at least (to a minimum ratio of one supervisor for one hundred teachers).

- In order to provide necessary professional help to teachers when they need it, supervisors should be based closer to the schools, perhaps in provincial or reginal centers.

- The present conflict in roles between educational counselor and investigator should be separated and supervisors should deal only with educational activities.

- Supervisory roles of the Ministry supervisors and criteria for evaluating the teachers should be cooperatively redefined and jointly implemented by both the supervisors (the evaluators) and the teachers (the evaluatees).

2- The Ministry of Education should regularly supply the supervisors with new teaching materials new resource books, and other publications to be used to introduce new ideas to teachers.

3- The Ministry of Education should support the supervisors' proposals concerning development of educational activities.

4- Supervisors are expected to have better training and educational knowledge than teachers. Supervisors should perhaps, therefore, be provided with advanced in-service training and studies designed specifically to give them more skill in supervision.

5- Greater numbers of supervisors should be added to the staff and efforts should be made to select new staff from among relatively younger people. A greater number of younger people might add strength to the system and expedite its modernization.

6- The data indicates that teachers as recepients do not have high esteem for the supervisors' ability to evaluate teachers' achievements accurately. This may exhibit the teacher's distrust of the objectivity of the supervisors' evaluations of teachers. From this finding it is suggested that:

- the function of evaluating the teachers' performance should be excluded from the supervisors' role;

- if evaluating a teacher's achievements is necessary for his or her promotion, this function could be given completely to the school directors who in the present system are the main immediate evaluators of teachers.

CONCLUSION

Supervision is one of the innovative areas in which new ideas and practices of modern teaching can be easily introduced to the teachers. Therefore the area of supervision could be accepted as a starting point to review any educational system. However, introducing an innovation to an educational system which is not free from the threat of pressure groups and not so eager to adopt new ideas might be a difficult task. There is a possibility that the proposed innovation could be perceived as a threat by the relevant members of the existing system.

Research shows that despite the wishes of teachers, supervisors, school directors and educational directors, there have not been any innovative changes in the supervisory activities in Turkey. Although almost all Ministers of Education after the 1960's have emphasized the necessity for modernization of the whole system, up until now unfortunately no concrete attempt to achieve this aim has been observed.

It is assumed that the formal institutional patterns and the classical and conservative attitudes of the top level executives in the Ministry of Education have exerted a negative influence on any proposed change. Resistance to these kinds of new ideas have come especially from the old bureaucrats who hold the power in the organization.

Consequently, the educational supervisory system in Turkey functions in the same way as it did in the 1950's. It is hoped that in the near future Turkish educational administrators and educators will be able to understand the importance of modernization in the supervisory practices of the Turkish Educational System.